



# Annual Report

Protecting Iraq's rivers and  
water resources and the  
communities that depend  
upon them.

# 2018



پاریزهرانی ئاو عیراق  
WATERKEEPERS IRAQ  
المحافظین علی المیاه العراق

# پاریزهرانی ئاو عیراق

We are Waterkeepers! .... We work as a voice calling for the protection of the rivers, lakes, marshes and waterways of the Tigris & Euphrates River Basin in Kurdistan and Iraq. We support local communities in the sustainable use of these natural resources.

1. We advocate for the proper planning and management of Iraq's water resources; addressing transboundary water issues; pushing for equitable water policy solutions; working for strong, water-related legislation; and organizing activities for the prevention and removal of dams that damage rivers and river-dependent communities.
2. We monitor water quality contaminants that pollute our waterways and push for citizen involvement in seeking innovative solutions that protect and promote the health of both Iraqi waterways and the human communities that depend upon them. We study and advocate for the protection of aquatic systems, species and habitats.
3. We use a variety of traditional and non-traditional advocacy, education, and outreach tools to raise awareness and educate all levels of our community from school children to scientists to our top government decision-makers.



## A message from the Iraq Upper Tigris Waterkeeper

I love nature and I love the sweet rivers around me but the work has been challenging over the past year. It has been difficult to be positive with all the problems we face but the amount of love I have for Nature will always remind me to continue to fight. Despite all the stress and anger I see and feel around me, I can still swim for long distances, paddleboard, raft, kayak on and camp next to my river. That gives me peace of mind and is why I'm still here as the Waterkeeper.



Last year, Waterkeepers Iraq faced immense obstacles. We had to remain strong despite the on-going conflict with Daesh (aka ISIS, the Islamic State of Iraq), the standoff between the Baghdad and Kurdistan governments, and the deep economic depression faced by the entire region. Even while these conflicts swirled around us, we did our longest swimming expedition ever to promote swimmable waters at Lake Dukan (40km!) and we hope to get more people involved next year.

There were two other major highlights of this past year. One was the completion of the Threatened Fish Project in Halgurd-Sakran Park, which was funded by the UK-based Conservation Leadership Programme. It wrapped up with a series of presentations in the Choman area of Erbil at over 10 outreach events. The other was the spring visit to the Mesopotamian Marshlands of southern Iraq, where activists from the Kurdistan Working Group for Water Rights were able to meet their partners in the south, many for the first time. Supported by the European Union, this project has helped us build relationships both within groups and individuals in Kurdistan but also between Kurds and Arabs fighting for healthy rivers and water quality.

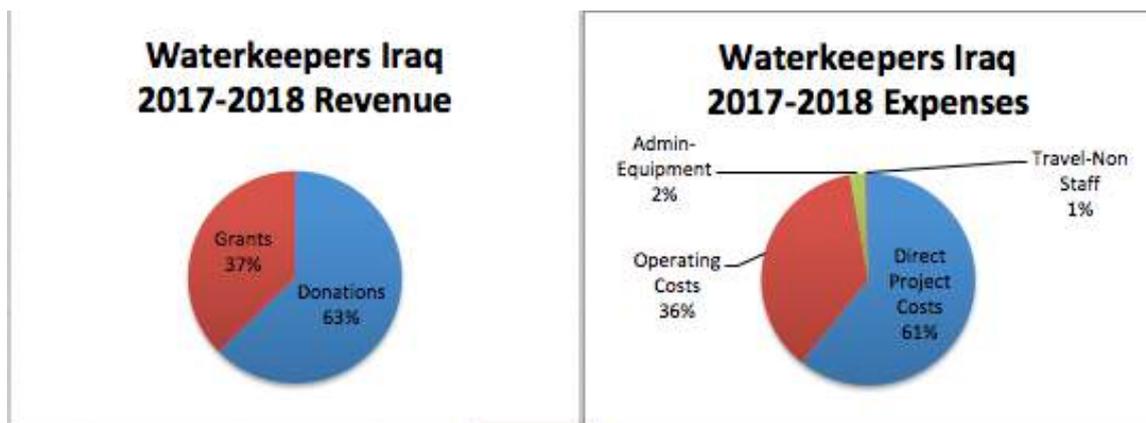
The Waterkeeper Movement is so important in the world. We all need to become waterkeepers because it is time to save and protect what we have left and stop thinking that there is nothing we can do because it is too late or someone else will do it for us. It's time for Iraq and Kurdistan to join together for a more important fight ... the fight against climate change, drought, pollution and habitat destruction ... the fight for environmental justice, water rights and Mother Nature. There will be no coffee, no chai, no beer, no nation, no future without WATER. We can't drink oil! We can't drink money! To have a healthy life and a healthy future we have to have clean WATER! That's why I'm asking you to join us and help us make our voice louder and louder: **SAVE WATER! EVERY DROP COUNTS!**

With deepest appreciation,

Nabil Musa

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## Waterkeepers Iraq Financial Performance



Front cover image: (from right to left) Nabil Musa, Rozhan Abdulrahman and Nebro Shawqi visit the ancient city of UR during the North-South Exchange.

# A Year In Review ...



During the 2017-2018, Waterkeepers Iraq completed the "**Watershed Assessment for threatened fish in Halgurd-Sakran Park, Iraqi-Kurdistan**", which was funded by the UK-based Conservation Leadership Programme. While the project officially started in the fall of 2016, most of the fieldwork took place in the summer, fall and winter of 2017-18. During the year we:

1. Surveyed nine rivers and streams that are encompassed in the Park Boundary to identify threats to water quality and fish habitat and identify the nine common fish species that inhabit park rivers.
2. Published and distributed educational flyers about the project and maps showing the threats and fish found in the Park Boundary.
3. Developed a short film (now posted on the Waterkeepers Iraq YouTube Channel)
4. And conducted eleven outreach events both in Erbil and Sulaimani educating people about the project, the threats to rivers and to fish habitat.



Started in March of 2017, the EU-funded project "**Mesopotamian youth for democratic governance, social cohesion and reconciliation in Iraq**" has been in full swing for over a year now and Waterkeepers Iraq has coordinated the Working Group for Water Rights that involves over 12 non-governmental environmental groups in Kurdistan. Dozens of activities have been organized under the auspices of the Working group, some of which are shown below.



**Protest of Iranian Dams at the Iranian Consulate in Sulaimani, July 2017**

**Completion of a 40km swim on Lake Dukan in to promote the swimmable waters campaign, sponsored by the Culture Café, September 2017**



**Save the Tanjero River Campaign, October 2017**

**Kurdistan Day of Action for Rivers in Dukan and Qashqoli, March 2018**



**North-South Exchange of Kurdish and Arab Water Rights Activists (Nabil Musa visits with Jassim Al-Asadi of Nature Iraq in Chiabish), April 2018**

**Nabil Musa meets with international waterkeepers at the annual Waterkeeper Conference in Buffalo, NY, USA, June 2018**



**Other related WI Actions & Activities during 2017-2018**

WI participates in the annual Waterkeeper Alliance Conference - Held in Buffalo, New York, USA, the annual conference brought together over 300 water advocates from around the globe to participate in a 3-day conference of workshops and strategizing. Nabil Musa attended and followed up with meetings with the WI Advisory group members in the U.S.

**River Clean-ups** - In March 2018, Waterkeepers Iraq with the X-Line Group organized the Kurdistan Day of Action for Rivers along the banks of the Lesser Zab River in Dukan, Kurdistan. The event featured rafting, performances and river clean up with the picnickers.



Later in spring of 2018, Waterkeepers Iraq, Earth network, American University of Iraq (AUIS) students, Environment keeper and the Working Group on Water Rights did a massive clean up at Ahmed Awa in the spring of 2018 as part of a service learning project for AUIS students.



**Enki, Sumerian God of Water** - The Sumerian God of Water, a 12-foot high street puppet of Enki, has made more appearances in 2018, including a visit to the Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington for the annual Rachel Carson Environmental Forum in the spring of 2018.

## Waterkeepers Iraq Structure



### WI Staff

Waterkeepers Iraq staff include Nabil Musa (Iraq Upper Tigris Waterkeeper & WI Manager), Rozhan Abdulrahman (Program Administrator) and Mohammed Kamil (Financial Manager) -

Staff contacts are: Nabil Musa - [info@waterkeepersiraq.org](mailto:info@waterkeepersiraq.org)  
Rozhan Abdulrahman - [rozhanwaterkeeper@gmail.com](mailto:rozhanwaterkeeper@gmail.com)

The Board of Directors oversees the operational activities of WI, appoints the Executive Coordinator and assists in WI's fundraising efforts.

The Advisory Board provides on-going program support and technical advice to the Executive Coordinator and Waterkeepers of WI.

The WI Board of Directors and Advisory Board are committed to increasing WI cultural, social and gender diversity and are considering new applicants to join both the Board of Directors (2 positions are open on the WI Board) and Advisory Board. Please contact [info@waterkeepersiraq.org](mailto:info@waterkeepersiraq.org) to find out more or contact one of the following:

### Founding Board Members

Shirwan Ali Hamajan - [canshirwan@gmail.com](mailto:canshirwan@gmail.com)  
Renas Hasan - [renas.h@btmail.com](mailto:renas.h@btmail.com)  
Karzan Omer - [karzanomer@gmail.com](mailto:karzanomer@gmail.com)

### Advisory Board Members

Anna Bachmann - [bachmanna@gmail.com](mailto:bachmanna@gmail.com)  
Virginia Tice - [virginia.tice@gmail.com](mailto:virginia.tice@gmail.com)  
Andrea Cattarossi - [a.cattarossi@hydronova.tech](mailto:a.cattarossi@hydronova.tech)

***WI wants to thank its volunteers and staff for their contribution to our work.***

Abdullah Salah, Agnes Kullos, Anna Bachmann, Ara Ahmad Raza, Azar Othman, Begard Sherwan, Behjat Omer Abdullah, Charlotte Wells, Cris Guajardo, D. Ata Muhammad Aladin, Danyar Abdulla, Dekan Sdiq, Hana Barzinji, Hardi Mamaqala, Hastyar Mahmood, Hazha Khalid, Hevy Hemn Hevy, Hoshyar Jamal, Karwan Shekhani, Karzan Fazil, Kawan Faraj, Khalil I Musa, Khanda Hameed, Lana Sherzad, Laniya Khalil Musa, Lolav Abdul Aziz, Lona Nadhif, Muhamad Sabah Raouf, Mukrian Ibrahim, Nabaz Samad, Nabaz Shexany, Nabil Musa, Nahro Shawqi, Nashmil Abdulla, Naz Nishtiman, Nishtiman Arif, Noor Abdul Alstarr, Pommelien de Silva Cosme, Pzho Kamil, Ranj Hussen, Rawezh Najmaddin, Raz Hassan, Renas Hassan, Rozhan Faraidun, Rozhgar Muhammad, Safe Muhammad, San Saravan, San Shaduman, Sangar Abdullah Kareem, Sara Tahir, Sazan Taha, Shabaz Omer., Shalhar Mohammed, Shamir Salar, Shano Aram, Shirwan Khan, Shkar Awat, Shwan Qaradaxhy, Sivar Jalal, Tolla Karim, Tracy Fuad, Virginia Tice

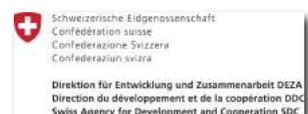
## 2017-2018 Donors & Sponsors



## Partners & Supporters



## Past Donors & Partners





# 2017-2018 By the Numbers

Three films made for the Waterkeepers Iraq YouTube Environmental Education Channel and currently working on three more



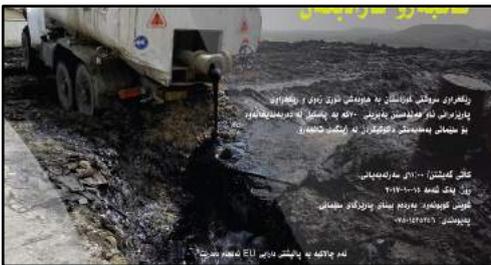
Over 8 media interviews in Rudaw TV, Outside Magazine, KurdSat TV, KNN Radio Hawlati Newspaper about Waterkeepers Iraq's work

Closed down 1 carwash on the Quilasan stream



2 clean up projects at Ahmed Awa and Qashqoli with over 200 Kg of garbage removed from 700 m of riverbank

1330 stakeholders reached in the Halgurd-Sakran Threatened Fish Habitat Project during 10 separate outreach events



Over sixty volunteers working with Waterkeepers Iraq



Waterkeepers Iraq-Kurdistan Facebook Group and Page have currently over 1348 members and 750 followers respectively and the [@WaterkeepersIQ](https://twitter.com/WaterkeepersIQ) Twitter Account has 84 followers

Contact Waterkeepers Iraq at:

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